DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 378 621 CS 508 796

AUTHOR	Ediger, Marlow
TITLE	Oral Communication Skills in the Rural School.
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	6p.
PUB TYPE	Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Class Activities; *Communication Skills; *Learning Activities; Primary Education; Rural Education; Rural Youth; Skill Development; *Speech Communication
IDENTIFIERS	Extemporaneous Speaking; Writing Contexts

ABSTRACT

Each student needs to achieve optimally in oral communication. The rural student should have ample opportunities to experience quality learning activities in communicating with others. First, pupils should have ample opportunities to practice making introductions. In society, people are introduced to each other. It is important to make the introductions properly so that enjoyable conversation might follow. Second, an excellent activity to stress is extemporaneous speaking. A learner should be given a topic and have to supply the content in a short period of time, say, 10 minutes. Third, pupils should select a poem to be read to the class. Fourth, rural learners should engage in debates. Debating can definitely lead to higher levels of thinking such as critical and creative thought. Sixth, students, when reading aloud out of the basal reader, should be instructed to read in an audience-centered manner. Seventh, rural pupils should write their own poems and read them to the class. Eighth, pupils should have ample opportunity to engage in creative prose writing. Ninth, practical writing is a must for all rural learners. Functional situations should be stressed. Thus, if pupils are practicing writing a friendly letter, the contents should be mailed or exchanged with classmates. (TB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 378 621

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
M. Ediger
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Oral Communication Skills in the Rural School

by Dr. Marlow Ediger, Professor of Education
Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville

1994

Each student needs to achieve optimally in oral communication. The rural school student should have ample opportunities to experience quality learning activities in communicating with others.

As a second learning activity, pupils should have ample opportunities to practice the making of introductions. In society, people are introduced to each other. It is important to make the introductions properly so that enjoyable conversation might follow. When making the introductions, pupils need to speak clearly so that effective communication takes place. The names of persons being introduced must be pronounced correctly; something polite and interesting about their background should be briefly mentioned. Generally the girl's or woman's name is stated first when introducing them to a boy or man. If persons of the same sex are being introduced to each other, the older person should be introduced to the younger individual in sequence. These are flexible rules to follow in the making of introductions. Adequate practice must be given rural school pupils in the making of introductions.

CS508776

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Third, Learners need to experience learning opportunities in which decisions need to be made quickly in terms of what to say and the order of content presented in oral communication. An excellent activity to stress here is extemporaneous speaking. The learner is given a topic to prepare a short talk to peers. The pupil receives the topic, but must prepare the contents. A short period of time is given to the learner to prepare the presentation, perhaps ten minutes. The pupils then gives the extemporaneous speech to peers in the classroom. The contents may also be cassette recorded or video taped to evaluate the speech more thoroughly. The pupil then receives feedback on the quality of the presentation. Learners can become highly motivated to prepare and deliver an extemporaneous speech. Following the feedback, a learner may prepare and present another extemporaneous talk.

Fourth, pupils may select a poem to read to the class. Interest in the poem chosen might well provide motivation to attain at a higher rate, as compared to the teacher doing the selecting. The reader of the poem must use appropriate guidelines when reading the poem. Thus, the learner should use voice inflection (proper stress, pitch, and juncture) when facing the audience in reading the poem. Listeners should feel that interest is inherent in the contents of the poem.

Fifth, rural school pupils should have ample opportunities to engage in debates. Debating can definitely lead to higher levels of thinking such as critical and creative thought. Much background content is needed also. Motivation can run high when the topic possesses perceived purpose. Time and effort go into the learning activity involving a debate. Problem solving, too, may become very

important in the debate. Thus, problems are identified, data gathered, hypotheses are developed, and each hypothesis is tested in a life like situation.

Sixth, when elementary age pupils read orally from the basal reader during class time, the teacher should guide learners to read in an audience centered manner. pupils then read with enthusiasm, have eye contact with classmates, read fluently, and possess confidence. Reading orally should not be boring nor should pupils feel it is a routing activity. Rather, oral reading is enjoyable and communicates with an audience. Practice is needed by the learner to read in an audience situation. The pupils then should be given time to read orally in private prior to reading to others in an audience centered approach.

Seventh, rural school pupils need to write their very own poems and share these with classmates. The poems may contain no rhyme nor syllabication. Free verse is then in evidence. With rhyme, learners might write couplets, triplets, quatrains, limericks, and triangular triplets. To stress syllabication, pupils can write haiku, tankas, and septolets. Diamond shaped poetry may be written such as a diamante. Thus a variety of types of poetry should be written by pupils and shared voluntarily with other learners. Rich background experiences should be in the offing prior to writing poetry. An idea centered curriculum must be in evidence in the classroom so that pupils have background information from which to write.

Eighth, pupils should have ample opportunities to engage in creative prose writing. With rich experiences, the pupils with teacher

guidance may write myths, legends, fairy tales, tall tales, and folk lore. The teacher must provide models to learners for each of these kinds of prose. He/she may orally read to pupils the previous kinds of prose. Learners must be able to differentiate clearly the different forms of creative prose. For example, a myth tells how something came to be such as the origin of the universe. Or, a legend tells about a real live person with supernatural traits added in time. Meaning and understanding must always be stressed by the rural school teacher.

Ninth, practical writing is a must for all learners in the rural school setting. Functional situations should be stressed here. Thus if pupils are practicing writing a friendly letter, the contents should be mailed or exchanged with classmates. Or if a business letter is written, the product should be sent to an exact address. Purpose is then involved in writing. The purpose emphasizes writing to receive a response to something ordered or wanted. Utilitarian writing is salient to stress in the rural language arts curriculum. Relevant parts of friendly and business letters must be learned by pupils, even to the memorization of these parts such as the heading, inside address, greeting, body, closing, and signature. Reasons for stressing these parts as be vital needs to be addressed by the rural language arts teacher. The body of the friendly letter can emphasize high degrees of creativity. The body of the business letter has more of definiteness that must be therein such as what is wanted or to be ordered. Considerable precision of content in the business letter is then necessary. Reading the contents to a peer might assist learners individually to develop proficiency in oral communication.

Tenth, relevant psychologies should be stressed in the rural language arts curriculum. Thus behaviorism with its precise measurably stated should be in evidence to provide for individual optimal levels of achievement. Criterion referenced tests are used to measure learner achievement in having attained the measurably stated, precise objectives. Results of the test should be discussed with the involved pupil. A second psychology that may be emphasized in teaching-learning situations is humanism. Humanists believe in an open- ended curriculum whereby the learner is heavily involved in determining scope and sequence in language arts activities. Teacher- pupil planning then becomes an important method of instruction. Teacher observation and pupil self evaluation are salient concepts to stress with humanism as a psychology of teaching.

In Closing

Pupils in rural schools need to experience a relevant language arts curriculum. There are definite guidelines that must be followed in order that these learners experience a rich set of activities. Rural pupils should write and think about their own experiences in life which can be quite different as compared to urban and suburban learners. There is also subject matter that cuts across the experiences of pupils in a mobile society. Individual differences among pupils must be respected and built upon so that each learner may experience success and worth in the language arts curriculum.